

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
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R 070930Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY DACCA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 350
INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 4842

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT BG
SUBJECT: ZIA CLAIMS HIS CABINET IS NOT PARTLY LEFTIST; GIVES
SOME IDEAS ON FUTURE POLITICAL SYSTEM

1. DR. G.W. CHOUDHURY OF NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY
IS VISITING DACCA AND SAW PRESIDENT ZIA MORNING OF AUGUST 6.
HE RELAYED SUBSTANCE OF HIS CONVERSATION TO POLCOUNSELOR ON
AUGUST 7.

2. HIS CABINET: ZIA TOLD HOUDHURY THAT HE UNDERSTOOD
THERE WAS SOME CONCERN AMONG AMERICANS AND OTHER WESTERNERS
THAT HE HAD INCLUDED A NUMBER OF PERSONS IN HIS NEWLY
EXPANDED CABINET WHO HAD "PRO-PEKING" BACKGROUNDS. ZIA
MENTIONED ENAYETULLAH KHAN, MASHIUR RAHMAN, KAZI ZAFAR
AHMAD AND MIRZA GOLAM HAFIZ. ZIA SAID HE WISHED HE COULD
MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THESE MEN WERE NOT IN ANY WAY COMMITTED
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TO A PEKINGESQUE POLICY AND THAT THEY WERE POLITICAL
REALISTS. ZIA ADDED THAT THEY LIVE LIKE CAPITALISTS
AND "EVEN DRINK WHISKEY". ZIA SAID THAT HE HIM-
SELF MADE THE FINAL DECISIONS AND HE WOULD NOT PERMIT
ANY SWING TO THE LEFT. CHOUDHURY SAID THAT IF ZIA
WANTED HE WOULD PASS THIS ON TO THE AMERICANS AND ZIA
SAID THAT HE WISHED CHOUDHURY WOULD. (COMMENT: AMONG

THE FOUR NAMED ONLY ENAYET HAS DISPLAYED ANY DOCTRINAIRE ATTITUDE BUT THIS IS OFTEN A CONVERSATIONAL GAMBIT. THE OTHERS KNOW FULLY, AS DOES ENAYET, WHERE THEIR BREAD IS BUTTERED.)

3. CHOUDHURY SAID HE WARNED THE PRESIDENT NOT TO OMIT THE URBAN INTELLIGENTIA FROM HIS POLITICAL EQUATION. HE RECOGNIZED THE PRESIDENT'S DESIRE TO GO DIRECTLY TO THE PEOPLE IN HIS TRAVELS IN THE RURAL AREAS AND APPLAUDED IT, BUT THERE WERE MANY OPINION MAKERS AND LEADERS IN THE CITIES WHO MUST ALSO BE KEPT IN MIND. HE REMINDED ZIA OF THE FALL OF AYUB KHAN WHICH HAPPENED IN PART WHEN A RABBLE-ROUSER WAS ABLE TO ENLIST URBAN ELITES AND MIDDLE CLASSES. CHOUDHURY SAID THAT ONE GROUP, UNIVERSITY TEACHERS, WERE PARTICULARLY DISAFFECTED NOW AND STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN TO BRING THEM BACK ON ZIA'S SIDE. ACCORDING TO CHOUDHURY, ZIA TOOK NOTE OF THIS.

4. CHOUDHURY ALSO SAID HE TOLD ZIA THAT HE WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE INCREASE IN POWER, AS CHOUDHURY SEES IT, OF THE ELITE SERVICES (THE FORMER CSP, PSP, ETC.) AND WARNED THAT THIS, TOO, HAD AN AYUBIAN FLAVOR TO IT. CHOUDHURY RECOMMENDED THAT THE MINISTERS BE TOLD TO EXERCISE GREATER POWER IN THE MINISTRIES TO REFLECT CABINET POLICY RATHER THAN YIELDING CONTROL TO THE SECRETARIES. AGAIN, ZIA TOOK NOTE.
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5. CHOUDHURY IS CONVINCED THAT ZIA HAS EVERY INTENTION OF GOING AHEAD WITH THE DEMOCRATICIZATION OF THE COUNTRY THROUGH PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS AND THE LIFTING OF MARTIAL LAW. THE LATTER HE BELIEVES WILL OCCUR, AS IT DID WITH AYUB, ON THE DAY PARLIAMENT MEETS FOR THE FIRST TIME. CHOUDHURY SAID MANY THINGS MIGHT HAPPEN TO UPSET THE TIMETABLE BUT HE IS SURE ZIA IS SINCERE.

6. CHOUDHURY SAID HE RECITED A TEXTBOOK DEFINITION OF DEMOCRACY WHICH INCLUDED FREE AND CONTESTED ELECTIONS, A FUNCTIONING OPPOSITION, FREE JUDICIARY, SOCIAL JUSTICE AND A FREE PRESS AND THAT ZIA RESPONDED THAT THESE WERE HIS GOALS. ZIA WILL MAKE SOME AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION TO SEPARATE THE POWERS OF THE THREE BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT. ZIA APPEARED AS YET UNSURE AS TO THE PRECISE DIFFERENTIATION BETWEEN THE PARLIAMENT AND THE PRESIDENCY, ALTHOUGH, AS CHOUDHURY NOTED, HE CANNOT BECOME A MERE FIGUREHEAD AFTER HIS ELECTION VICTORY AND HIS ACTIVE CAMPAIGNING.
SCHNEIDER

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Disposition History: n/a
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